

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEA-06 NSC-07 NSCE-00 SP-02 SAB-01

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R 281345Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3953

S E C R E T ATHENS 4118

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GR

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S CONVERSATIONS WITH VLACHOS AND PALAMAS

1. SECRETARY GENERAL VLACHOS OF FOREIGN MINISTRY TOLD ME JUNE 27 HE WILL BE RETIRING AT END OF THREE MONTHS WHEN HE WILL COMPLETE 35 YEARS IN GREEK DIPLOMATIC SERVICE. HE IS VERY DEPRESSED ABOUT SITUATION. HE NOTED HOW ENORMOUSLY DIFFICULT IT HAS BEEN TO REPRESENT GREEK GOVERNMENT SINCE 1967. IN FACT, HALF FACETIOUSLY, HE OPINED THAT HIS FIRST ACT AFTER RETIREMENT WOULD BE TO WRITE A BOOK ENTITLED "SEVEN YEARS OF MARTYRDOM IN THE GREEK FOREIGN SERVICE".

2. INCIDENTALLY, VLACHOS APPEARED TO BELIEVE THAT GREEK AMBASSADOR TO ARGENTINA SOSSIDES WAS NOW OUT OF RUNNING FOR POST OF FOREIGN MINISTER.

3. WHEN I SAW FORMER FONMIN PALAMAS JUNE 26 HE ADMITTED HE WAS IN CONTACT WITH KEY ELEMENTS OF MILITARY REGIME. IN REPLY TO MY INQUIRY, HE SAID HE COULD NOT SERVE PRESENT REGIME UNLESS IT MADE SOME MOVE, AT LEAST POINTING TOWARD POLITICAL NORMALIZATION. AS EXAMPLE OF WHAT HE HAD IN MIND HE MENTIONED CALLING OF CONSTITUTENT ASSEMBLY TO DRAFT A CONSTITUTION. IN SUCH EVENT HE WOULD CONSIDER PARTICIPATION. FROM THIS EXCHANGE I

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GATHER PALAMAS MAY BE ACTIVELY DICKERING WITH IOANNIDES FOR

PARTICIPATION ON HIS TERMS, WHICH COULD MEAN POST OF DEPUTY
PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER COMBINED OR LATTER ALONE.

4. PALAMAS SPOKE WELL OF ANDROUTSOPOULOS WHOM HE DESCRIBED
AS "AN HONEST MAN" AND THOUGHT PRESENT GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN
NOTABLY SUCCESSFUL IN DEALING WITH INFLATION PROBLEM. I SAID
THIS WAS ALSO MY IMPRESSION BUT ADDED THAT DANGER OF RECESSION
AND STAGNATION ON ONE HAND, AND MISHANDLING OF DIRECT FOREIGN
INVESTMENT ON THE OTHER ALSO LOOMED LARGE ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE.
TASCA

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